

April 28, 2024



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

TRIUMPHAL ENTRANCE OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM (PALM SUNDAY)

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Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow
Jesus Christ & manifest the Kingdom of
God in the Liturgy of His Church. If this is
your first time with us, give us a chance to
get to know you and fill out a visitor card.

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A Word from the Holy Fathers

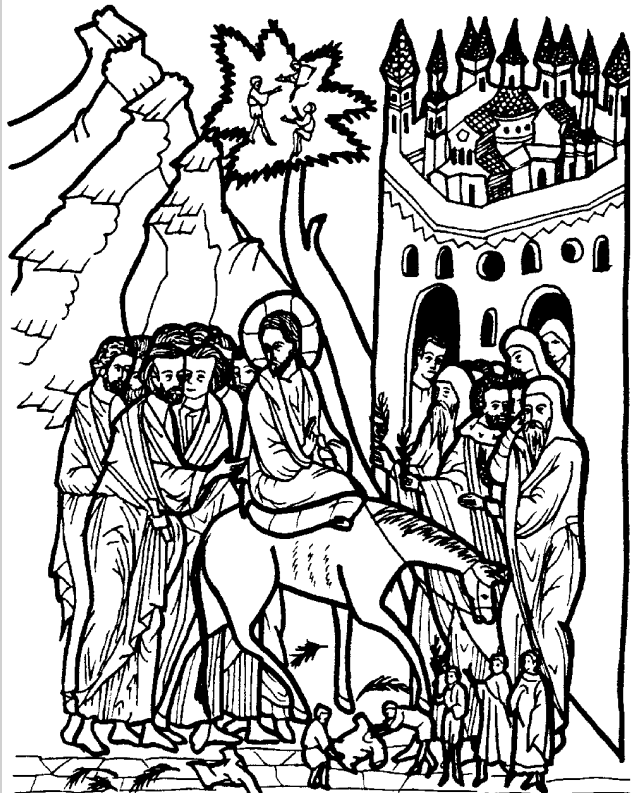
Let us run to accompany Him as He
hastens toward His passion, and imitate
those who met Him then, not by covering
His path with garments, olive branches or
palms, but by doing all we can to prostrate
ourselves before Him by being humble
and by trying to live as He would wish.
Then we shall be able to receive the Word
at His coming, and God, whom no limits
can contain, will be within us.

—St. Andrew of Crete

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails**

E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org
with your request.



***Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He that comes in the
Name of the Lord!***

Parish Life

Holy Saturday Break-Fast

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on Holy Saturday we bless:

- Bread/Rolls
- Wine
- Fruits & Nuts

If you can bring some for the blessing please sign-up using the sheet in the narthex.



Pascha Break-Fast Potlucks

After Paschal services Saturday night/ Sunday morning as well as after Paschal Vespers on Sunday afternoon there are potluck meals for everyone to celebrate together.

Please see the sign-up sheets in narthex to sign-up to bring something to share.



New People Needed to Volunteer as Greeters & Counters

Due to illness and people traveling, we are in urgent need for new people to volunteer as Greeters & Counters.

There are easy to follow “how to” documents for each of these ministries to help newcomers.

Please speak with Fr. Michael if you are willing to help.

Paschal Bake Goods & Food Available Orders Due Today

The Auxiliary will be offering a selection of Paschal baked goods and foods for our parishioners.

An order form has been included in this week's bulletin. Orders are due by April 28, the latest. People will be able to pick up their orders on Holy Thursday

Donations for Paschal Flowers

We are collecting donations for flowers for Holy Week & Pascha.



Please give as you are able and include “flowers” on your check

PASCHAL PLANNING SHEET POSTED

Our annual Paschal Planning Sheet is posted in the narthex. Please review it and see how you can participate.

Opportunities include:

- Decorating the temple and Christ's tomb (no experience required!)
- Reading one of the 15 Old Testament passages on Saturday morning
- Reading the Gospel in different languages on Sunday
- Carrying the winding sheet during processions (tall individuals encouraged!)
- Supplying essential items unique to these services (extra light olive oil, red eggs)
- And more!

There are opportunities for people of all ages. If you're not sure about something—don't be shy! Ask Fr Michael or other parishioners for more info on what these opportunities entail.

Today's Worship — Hymns

Set-up & Decoration of Tomb Holy Friday 10:30am

We need folks to help with setting up and decorating the Tomb of our Lord on Holy Friday. We will be gathering at 10:30am after Royal Hours.

Please consider joining in and helping!



Paschal BBQ & Egg Hunt—Sun 5/5

After the Paschal Agape Vespers we WILL have our lamb BBQ and Children's Easter Egg Hunt.



“Trimmers” Needed to Help Prepare the Lamb for the Paschal BBQ Wednesday 7pm

Volunteers are needed to help trim and cube the lamb for our Sunday afternoon BBQ.

The group will be gathering in the kitchen on Wednesday night after Matins.

Please consider helping!

Vigil Over the Lord's Tomb

A pious tradition is to keep vigil over the Lord's Tomb from Friday afternoon all the way until Paschal services on Saturday night reading the Psalms (Friday night) and then the Acts of the Apostles (Saturday).

People are encouraged to sign-up for one or more time-slots using the sheet in the narthex.



Red Eggs for Pascha & Rose (Flower) Petals for Holy Saturday

Some folks for signed up to bring red boiled eggs for Pascha night but we need about 6 dozen more.

We also need rose petals (or other flower petals) for Holy Saturday's Divine Liturgy

If you can help, please sign-up on the form in the narthex (vestibule) of the church.



Basket Blessings After Services Pascha Night & Sunday Afternoon

People are encouraged to follow the tradition of bringing a basket full of Paschal foods to be blessed.

Blessings will occur after the Paschal services Saturday night/Sunday morning and after Paschal Vespers on Sunday afternoon in the church hall.

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

TROPARIA

Palm Sunday—Tone 1

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Your Passion,
You confirmed the universal resurrection,
O Christ God.
Like the children with the palms of victory,
we cry out to You, O Vanquisher of Death:
“Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord!”

Palm Sunday—Tone 4

When we were buried with You in baptism,
O Christ God,
we were made worthy of eternal life by your Resurrection.
Now we praise You and sing:
“Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord!”

KONTAKION

Palm Sunday—Tone 6

Sitting on Your throne in Heaven,
carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God,
accept the praise of angels and the songs
of children, who sing:
“Blessed is He Who comes to recall Adam!”



PROKEIMENON

Tone 4 (*Palm Sunday*) — Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us! (*Ps 117:26-27*)

v: O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever! (Ps 117:1)

ALLELUIA

Tone 1 - V. O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things! (*Ps. 97:1*)

V. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (*Ps. 97:5*)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your kindness be known to all. The Lord is at hand! ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are commendable, if there is any virtue or any praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you learned, received, heard, and saw in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Gospel — John 12:1-18

¹² Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus (who had been dead and whom Jesus had raised from the dead) lived. ² Therefore, they gave a supper for him there. Martha served while Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with him. ³ Then Mary took a pound of fragrance of pure nard, very precious; she anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. ⁴ Then Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, one of his disciples and the one who would betray him, said, ⁵ "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ Now Judas said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the money box, he used to steal what was put into it. ⁷ But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! She has kept this for the day of my burial. ⁸ For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

⁹ Meanwhile, a large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there. They came, not only for Jesus' sake, but also in order to see Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ The chief

priests even conspired to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹ because on his account many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believed in him.

¹² On the next day, a great multitude had come to the feast. When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ they took branches from palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!"

¹⁴ Having found a young donkey, Jesus sat on it. As it is written:

¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion! Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt."

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but after Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about him, and that they had done these things to him.

¹⁷ Now the multitude that had been with Jesus when he had called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify about it. ¹⁸ For this reason also, the crowd had come out to meet him, because they had heard that he had done this sign.



Our Life in Christ

WHY THE WISE THIEF WAS PARDONED (EXCERPT)

—St John of Shanghai and San Francisco

And one of the malefactors which were hanging railed on Him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou contest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise. (Luke 23:39-43)

This is how the holy Evangelist Luke relates the edifying and moving incident concerning the conversion and the Lord's pardoning of the thief who hung on the cross next to Him on Golgotha.

How did the thief deserve such mercy? What prompted such a quick and definitive response from the Lord? All the righteous figures of the Old Testament, including Saint John the Baptist, were still shut up in hades. The Lord Himself was preparing to descend into hades, not, of course, to suffer there, but to bring out the prisoners.

The Lord had not yet promised anyone to lead them into the Kingdom of Heaven; even the Apostles were promised to be taken into His mansions only after He had prepared them.

How is it that a thief was granted such mercy before anyone else? Why were the gates of Heaven opened so quickly for him? Let us examine the soul of the thief and the attendant circumstances.

Gazing upon the One hanging on the Cross, he saw as in a mirror his moral downfall. All the good concealed within him was awakened and surfaced. He came to a realization of his sins, he



understood that it was his own fault that had brought him to this bitter end; he had no one to blame. Like the thief crucified on Christ's left, he too had been gripped by hatred for the executioners, but this gave way to a feeling of humility and compunction. He felt fear at God's coming judgment.

Sin became loathsome, dreadful. In his soul he was no longer a thief. There awakened in him feelings of love for mankind, merciful kindness. With his fear over the fate of his soul there was united a revulsion to the outrage being heaped upon the innocent Sufferer. [...]

Perhaps he could say something to ease His suffering even just a little, perhaps even just one of the blasphemers would be ashamed and stop slandering Him. Christ had promised to give a reward for a cup of water offered in His name; surely He would not leave him without recompense. Let those reviling Christ revile him also! This would tighten his bond with Christ! He was going to share Christ's lot here; Christ would surely remember him when He came into His glory!

Our Life in Christ

There, amidst the clamor of slander, blasphemy and derision, he began exhorting his companion hanging to the left of Christ to stop slandering Him. *Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly: for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.* And then from his lips came a humble voice: *Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom* (Luke 23:40-42).

This was the cry of a former thief — now Christ's new disciple — who came to believe in Christ at a time when His other disciples had abandoned Him. [...]

The Apostles wavered in their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, because they anticipated and desired to see in Him an earthly king, in whose kingdom they could sit at the right and the left hand of the Lord.

The thief understood that the Kingdom of Jesus of Nazareth, despised and given over to a shameful death, was not of this world. And it was precisely this Kingdom that the thief now sought: the gates of earthly life were closing after him; opening before him was eternity. He had settled his accounts with life on earth, and now he thought of life eternal. And here, at the threshold of eternity, he began to understand the vanity of earthly glory and earthly kingdoms. He recognized that greatness consists in righteousness, and in the righteous, blamelessly tortured Jesus he saw the King of Righteousness. The thief did not ask Him for glory in an earthly kingdom but for the salvation of his soul.

“The thief was the first to comprehend the nature of Christ’s Kingdom, and therefore he was the first to enter it..”

The faith of the thief, born of his esteem for Christ's moral greatness, proved stronger than the faith of the Apostles, who, although captivated by the loftiness of Christ's teaching, based their faith to a still greater extent on the signs and wonders He wrought. [...]

The thief confessed Christ; he confessed Him before a whole multitude who were railing at Him; he confessed Him then when no one else dared, and when even those few disciples and women who remained faithful to Him manifested their love for Him only with their bitter tears. [...]

He was the first to comprehend the nature of Christ's Kingdom, and therefore he was the first to enter it.

He was the first to see *Jesus Christ and Him crucified* (1 Cor. 2:2), the first to preach *Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumblingblock, to the Greeks foolishness, But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God* (1 Cor. 1:23-24).

For this reason he was also first to personally experience the power and wisdom of God, the power of Christ's co-suffering and regenerating love; he was first to hear “the sound of the power of the Cross, for through it Paradise was opened” (Fourth Ode, Ascension Canon).

His thorough repentance of his sins and transgressions, his profound humility, his firm faith in the Crucified Lord Jesus Christ Who gave Himself over to suffering, and his confession, made at a time when the whole world was against Christ — these are the strands which wove the crown that adorned the head of the former thief; this is the substance of which the key was forged that opened to him the gates of Paradise!



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Sun April 28—Palm Sunday

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Mon April 29 — Holy Monday

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Tues April 30 — Holy Tuesday

10:00am — Presanctified Liturgy

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Wed May 1 — Holy Wednesday

6:00pm — Matins for Holy Thursday

Thurs May 2—Holy Thursday

8:10:00am— Vespers Liturgy for Institution of the Lord's Supper

6:00pm — Matins for Holy Friday w/ 12 Passion Gospels

Fri May 3 — Holy Friday

9:00am — Royal Hours

11:00am — Decorate the Tomb

Fri May 3 — Holy Friday (continued)

3:00pm — Vespers w/ Entombment

Keep Vigil Over the Tomb (see sign-up)

6:00pm — Matins for Holy Sat w/ Lamentations & Procession

Keep Vigil Over the Tomb (see sign-up)

Sat May 4 — Holy Saturday

10:00am — Vespers Liturgy w/ 15 OT Readings

Keep Vigil Over the Tomb (see sign-up)

11:30pm — Paschal Vigil & Divine Liturgy followed by Blessing of

Baskets & Agape Meal

Sun May 5 — Holy PASCHA

1:00pm — Paschal Divine Liturgy w/ Procession & Gospel in Many

Languages

2:00pm — Parish BBQ

Mon May 6 — Bright Monday

10:00am — Paschal Liturgy w/ Procession followed by Meal

For more dates & links please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Many Years!

Name Days

Timothy Anderson 5/3

Birthdays

Anna Kaminskaya 4/30

Dmitriy Panasenko 5/1 James Pelachik 5/4

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Email: info@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired & Dn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA